

Introduction of Superfast Train between Howrah and Haldia

2889. SHRI RUP CHAND MURMU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have since taken any decision to provide fast train services between Howrah and Haldia;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) Presently two pairs of EMU locals are running between Howrah and Haldia. Introduction of additional fast train services between Howrah and Haldia has been examined but not found feasible due to operational and resource constraints.

Construction of Underpass near Ultadanga Railway Station

2890. SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways has decided to construct an underpass near the Ultadanga Railway Station in West Bengal;

(b) if so, whether the Government of West Bengal has been contributed their share of cost and made land available to the railways in this regard;

(c) if so, the reasons for delay in starting the above work; and

(d) the time by which the above work is likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes Sir, on deposit terms.

(b) Rs. 1 crore have been made available by State Government out of an estimated cost of Rs.3.59 crore. State Government has agreed to hand over required road area (land) by 15.03.97

(c) State Government could make available details of the alignment and junction arrangements of the 3 metre diameter sewer pipe at the site in April, 1996 and required land (area of 267 sq.m.) is still to be handed over to Railway by them.

(d) In view of State Government commitment to hand over requisite land to Railways, the work is targetted to complete by 31.3.98.

Radio Station, Karimganj

2891. SHRI DWARAKANATH DAS : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1083 on November 28, 1996 regarding installation of a Radio Station, Karimganj, Assam and state :

(a) whether the construction work at the said radio station has since been started;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons for non-implementation of the same so far; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (d) A scheme has been drawn up to a radio station with 20 KW MW Transmitter at Karimganj in Assam subject to availability of funds and other infrastructural facilities. The lead time involved in implementation of such scheme is three to four years after the approval of the scheme.

Automatic Exchanges

2892. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of automatic telephone exchanges in the country and the percentage of faults reported from each of the circle;

(b) the number of non-automatic telephone exchanges and the period required to convert them into automatic exchanges; and

(c) the capability of the country in developing and producing its own automatic exchanges and the annual production of automatic exchanges and expenditure involved for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) There are 22,302 automatic telephone exchanges in the country as on 31.1.97. Percentage of faults reported from each of the Circle is enclosed as Statement.

(b) All the telephone exchanges in the country are automatic.

(c) The capability of developing and producing the latest state-of-the-art Digital Automatic Exchanges is available in the country.

The premier research unit of Department of Telecom viz., C-DOT has designed and developed Digital Electronic Exchanges of different capacities for their application in rural and urban areas.